



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

This is a repository copy of *Park futures: Excavating images of tomorrow's urban green spaces*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/149617/>

Version: Accepted Version

Article:

Barker, A orcid.org/0000-0001-7801-4216, Crawford, TA orcid.org/0000-0001-5792-5977, Booth, N et al. (1 more author) (2020) *Park futures: Excavating images of tomorrow's urban green spaces*. *Urban Studies*, 57 (12). pp. 2456-2472. ISSN 0042-0980

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098019875405>

© Urban Studies Journal Limited 2019. This is an author produced version of a paper accepted for publication in *Urban Studies*. Uploaded in accordance with the publisher's self-archiving policy.

Reuse

Items deposited in White Rose Research Online are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved unless indicated otherwise. They may be downloaded and/or printed for private study, or other acts as permitted by national copyright laws. The publisher or other rights holders may allow further reproduction and re-use of the full text version. This is indicated by the licence information on the White Rose Research Online record for the item.

Takedown

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>



Park Futures: Excavating Images of Tomorrow's Urban Green Spaces

Journal:	<i>Urban Studies</i>
Manuscript ID	CUS-371-19-04.R1
Manuscript Type:	Article
Discipline: Please select a keyword from the following list that best describes the discipline used in your paper.:	Sociology
World Region: Please select the region(s) that best reflect the focus of your paper. Names of individual countries, cities & economic groupings should appear in the title where appropriate.:	Europe, Western Europe
Major Topic: Please identify up to 5 topics that best identify the subject of your article.:	Crime/Social Order, Land Use, Public Space, Community, Governance
You may add up to 2 further relevant keywords of your choosing below::	urban parks, social futures

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Park Futures: Excavating Images of Tomorrow’s Urban Green Spaces

Abstract

British urban parks are a creation of the nineteenth century and central feature in the Victorian image of the city. In the UK, parks are at a critical juncture as to their future role, prospects and sustainability. This article contributes to renewed interest in ‘social futures’ by thinking forward through the past about the trajectory of Victorian public parks. We outline six images of what parks might become derived from traces in history and extrapolations from current trends. These projections diverge in terms of adaptations to funding and governance, management of competing demands and organisation of use. In contrast to a dominant Victorian park ideal and its relative continuity over time, we are likely to see the intensification of increasingly varied park futures. We draw attention to interaction effects between these differing images of the future. Excavated from the Victorian legacy, the park futures presented have wider potential inferences and resonance, including beyond the UK. By mapping divergent visions for parks, we call for a public debate about how parks might be re-imagined in ways that draw upon their rich heritage and highlight the pivotal role of civil society actors in shaping future pathways between possible, probable and preferable futures.

Keywords: crime, social order, land use, public space, community, governance, urban parks, social futures.

British urban public parks are largely a creation of the nineteenth century and have become quintessential components of the contemporary city. The Victorian park ‘ideal’ – as bounded, designed and regulated space in contrast to the pollution and disorder of the surrounding city (Churchill et al 2019) - casts a long shadow over public park development to the present day. In the UK at least, it shapes how parks are and have been conceived, administered, used and imagined. This idealised image of the urban park has percolated beyond the inner-city variant borne of the Victorian era – where it is nonetheless most evident – into its diverse twentieth-century adaptations. This Victorian ideal has been reinforced periodically within recent debates and discourses about urban parks as cultural assets, forged in an imagined past and funded as ‘heritage projects’. Moreover, the exportation/importation and international diffusion of this British model – its design, aesthetic and purpose - beyond the UK and notably across the Commonwealth, is testimony to its importance in framing the ways in

1
2
3 which park futures – more generally – might be imagined. Hence, while our focus is on the
4 past, present and future fate of Victorian parks in British cities, specifically, we suggest that
5 the implications of our arguments might extend to other parks both in the UK and diverse
6 parts of the world where the Victorian image has held some sway.
7
8
9

10
11 Public parks were key features in the making of the Victorian city, expressing Victorian
12 sensibilities and values. With the growth of cities and enclosure of common lands, there was
13 increasing concern regarding the shortage of open spaces to promote public health. By the
14 1840s, a major movement was underway to provide ‘people’s parks’ (Conway 1991). The
15 ideal park was to be an improved space serving as an agent in shaping the city’s social future
16 through physical and moral improvement. It was defined in contrast to the surrounding city.
17 First, the park was to be governed as a municipal green space, subject to minimal
18 construction, that would serve as ‘lungs’ or ‘ventilators’ of the city. Second, the park was
19 mainly municipally-funded, largely free from industry, agriculture or commerce. Third, the
20 park was to be purposefully designed and managed largely as an inclusive space of
21 recreation, where visitors from different classes were permitted to relax, play and mix
22 together in normatively-ordered ways - requiring copious rules, regulations and codes of
23 conduct. These themes were writ large in the 1851 Great Exhibition and inspired many of the
24 parks created in the ensuing years. Since the Victorian era, subsequent visions for
25 remodelling and remaking cities of the future have invariably contained a vital place for
26 parks, as evinced in Ebenezer Howard's vision of a new Garden city at the turn of the
27 twentieth century. Although people’s uses of parks diversified from the late nineteenth
28 century, the rationale for purchasing new parks largely remained constant before the First
29 World War. In this sense, the Victorian park movement propagated a dominant ideal of the
30 park as a green space of vitalising recreation and edifying association that has been broadly
31 consistent over time, despite new factors shaping park development in the twentieth century
32 to serve suburban locations (Conway 2000). So pervasive is the image of the Victorian park
33 that over the past two decades over £950 million has been invested by the Heritage Lottery
34 Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund primarily in restoring parks to their Victorian aesthetic.
35 According to some commentators, too much focus and funding has been on preserving the
36 past rather than reimagining the future (House of Commons 2017).
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57

58 Over the last 150 years, many Victorian parks have remained stubbornly similar in design,
59 appearance and aesthetic. They have persisted as relatively calm islands of continuity whilst
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

the seas of commerce have ravaged around them reshaping the surrounding urban environment. Yet, perhaps because of this relative consistency, there has been insufficient critical attention accorded to how historic parks might evolve to serve changing needs or adapt to social conditions. In contrast to the dominant Victorian park ideal, we are likely to see the intensification of increasingly varied urban park futures as municipal authorities respond to the challenges of super-diversity, conditions of austerity and unfolding dynamics of demographic and urban change. We develop and consider six images of what urban parks might become. These diverge around three core dimensions that were configured in particular ways in the Victorian ideal of the ‘bounded, designed and regulated’ park (Churchill et al 2019): models of funding and governance; the management of competing demands; and the organisation of park use. As we demonstrate, several of the trends identified have historic precedents and have emerged over a longer timeframe, in part, informed by planning ideals, visions and imperatives other than those of the Victorian era. These park logics have co-existed alongside but invariably been subordinated to the Victorian image. As such, we seek to excavate images of tomorrow by discovering traces in the past. This is not to suggest that the trends that inform the typologies are wholly new, but rather to highlight the braiding of continuity and change – ‘persistence, micro-change and radical discontinuity’ in the shape of history (Corfield 2007: 242). While the contemporary context of austerity presents a precarious moment in the history of Victorian parks and a possible ‘tipping point’ in their trajectory, the pressures on parks that austerity has surfaced are by no means wholly novel.

The images we present are intended to illustrate contrasts between different directions of travel that historic urban parks are following; they are not fixed, nor are they projected end-points. As ideal types, we do not anticipate that parks will conform neatly to any single image that finds direct form in any ‘real life’ experience. Multiple visions may coexist and infuse how specific parks are governed, resulting in novel ‘emergent patterns’. The paper draws on historic and contemporary examples from the UK and beyond to illustrate and inform these images of park futures. While we do not claim to cover all developments or facets of public parks and our primary focus is on the fate of the Victorian park, we contend that our images of the future have wider application and resonance – especially in relation to post-Victorian inner-city parks and in regard to parks in other parts of the world, notably where the British Victorian ideal has been imported. The legacy of the Victorian ideal has endured over time; it remains a fundamental reference point upon which national debate about the future of public parks return, including the recent parliamentary inquiry into ‘the future of public parks’

(House of Commons 2017) and the Government's response to it (DCLG 2017a). Our intention is to draw out contrasts and divergences that pattern different expectations about and uses of public parks to spark and inform a wider debate about possible, probable and preferable park futures.

The article is organised in three parts. First, we discuss how the paper advances work on social futures and provide a methodological note on the approach used to excavate our images of the future. Second, we sketch out the current predicament to argue that the present moment constitutes a possible turning point in the historic trajectories of urban parks. The third section outlines six possible park futures. These we term 'club parks', 'theme parks', 'city magnet parks', 'variegated parks', 'co-mingling parks' and 'for sale parks'. We highlight salient features and points of reference to inform and structure a public debate about the future of parks and how parks might be re-imagined in ways that draw upon their rich heritage.

Social Futures

This paper is part of a wider, historically-informed project which strives to think forward through the past (Churchill et al 2018; 2019; Barker et al 2019). It contributes to a renewed interest in 'social futures' (Adam 2010; Urry 2016), albeit one that is rooted in an 'historical consciousness', often absent in contemporary sociological analysis (Inglis 2014: 101). It aims not simply to extrapolate the future from the contemporary, but also to excavate historic traces of the future and to understand how past, present and future are interlaced. We argue that people's anticipation of the future can have profound implications for how they live in the present as their 'horizons of expectation' and 'spaces of experience' mutually interact, informing and constituting each other (Koselleck 2004).

Bell (1997: 148) asserted: 'there are no past possibilities and no future facts'. The future is to be sought – imagined, projected and shaped – in present conceptions, expectations, visions and plans. It is also to be excavated in seeds of the future found in the past; notably in what Koselleck (2004) refers to as 'futures past'. It may seem trite to assert that futures are uncertain and unpredictable. They are, after all, the outcome of a multiplicity of factors, only some of which may be knowable. There are plenty of 'black swans' (Taleb 2007) to be discovered; highly improbable or unexpected events that can have long-term ramifications with socially transformative consequences. These can produce significant ruptures, radical

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

historic discontinuity - or sudden ‘tipping points’ - that fundamentally alter path-dependencies. However, the future is neither fully determined nor a blank page. Here, our time horizon for future thinking stretches roughly 30 years hence, prompting us to question what urban parks might look like come the bi-centennial anniversary of the Victorian Great Exhibition, in 2051.

We articulate various prefigurative ‘images of the future’ with two specific implications. The first is that it encourages those articulating social futures to contribute to both future-knowing and processes of future-shaping. Change is prompted by ‘importing the future into the present’ (Bell and Wau 1971: 35) and holding it up to scrutiny. Importantly, this renders us, as social scientists, not simply responsible for our actions in the present but for the eventual effects of our change-directed work. In doing so, Adam (2010: 370) draws a distinction between ‘present futures’ and ‘futures present’, each of which positions us differently in relation to successors who are affected by our actions. The former entails ‘seeking ways of borrowing from the future for the benefit of the present’ (Adam 2010: 369), whereas the latter urges conscious consideration of those who will inhabit that future.

Second, this commitment to future-shaping informs Bell’s (1997) useful differentiation between *possible*, *probable* and *preferable* futures. Possible futures have some foundation in reality; in past and present experiences (as such they are not altogether or essentially utopian or dystopian). They require making, what Bell and Wau (1971: 37) call, ‘possidictions’; rather than predictions, in effect these entail the search for real possibilities amenable to planning, projection and instigation. Probable futures are ones deemed most likely to occur within some specified period if things continue as they are (Bell 1997: 80). Preferable futures, on the other hand, constitute desirable pathways aligned with normative choices or moral predispositions. These various futures connect the past, present and future in somewhat different ways. Whereas *possible futures* engage with the present future and *probable futures* are established on basis of past evidence and trends that are known, *preferable futures* tie past and future together in a normatively constituted present.

The methodology draws on a combination of two approaches. The first entails learning from past visions and established historical developments; both expectations and experiences. They constitute anticipation through the past, incorporating past experiences of ‘failed’ futures, of ‘paths not taken’, as well as obdurate path dependencies across time. The second is

1
2
3 to extrapolate from the present, to identify emerging trajectories and trends; to visualise,
4 delineate and elaborate ‘foresight’ into the future. These two methods are combined because,
5 as Urry (2016: 96) notes, ‘extrapolations are often based on a limited understanding of the
6 long-term path-dependent relationships from the past, which can be enormously difficult to
7 dislodge’. They provide a method for excavating the future that responds to Corfield’s (2007:
8 252) challenge: ‘to find multidimensional ways of interpreting the combination of
9 persistence, accumulation and transformation that between them shape the past and present
10 and, prospectively, the future too’. In the futures we outline, none are explicitly utopian or
11 dystopian, albeit some serve a cautionary purpose as a warning to those in the present.
12 Imagery as cautionary tale can serve to warn against gradual, accumulated change – as we
13 ‘quickly grow used to the way things are’ (Garland 2001: 1) – by holding up a mirror to
14 arouse sensibilities of where we may be heading (see Davis 1990). In this sense, they are all
15 possible and to some degree probable, the extent to which one or a combination is preferable
16 is a question of normative choices.
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 **The Current Predicament facing UK Parks**

30 UK parks faced severe threats in the 1970/80s, resulting in a decline in their condition and
31 visitor numbers, prompting questions about their rationale and prospects. While this funding
32 and governance crisis was not unique to Victorian parks *per se*, it found particular expression
33 in the challenges it raised for the Victorian ideal. From the 1970s, as Greenhalgh and
34 Worpole (1995: 65) note, local authorities were ‘managing the decline of the Victorian park
35 model’, including the demise of the iconic park keeper (Lambert 2005) and loss of key
36 features and facilities – such as drinking fountains, glasshouses and bandstands – that gave
37 the Victorian park its distinctive aesthetic. However, historic parks enjoyed something of a
38 renaissance from the mid-1990s, supported by new heritage funding programmes.
39 Nevertheless, since the global banking crisis and the subsequent politics of austerity, the
40 prospect of a decline in the condition of historic parks has re-emerged (Layton-Jones 2016b).
41 The Local Government Association’s ‘graph of doom’ demonstrates that, if spending
42 projections are accurate and if councils’ statutory responsibilities remain the same, by 2020
43 ‘statutory services and social care costs will swallow up most local council spending leaving
44 very little for other services to the community such as libraries, parks and leisure centres’.¹ A
45 report on the *State of UK Public Parks* highlighted the present juncture as a possible turning
46 point in the fortunes and historic trajectories of urban parks with reverberations long into the
47 future (HLF 2016). It found that 92% of park managers have had their budgets reduced and
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

95% expect their budgets will continue to fall, although there are large variations in the level of these cuts across the UK (HLF 2016: 10).

Recognising the gravity of the challenges facing parks today, MPs on the Communities and Local Government Select Committee in its major inquiry into the future of public parks concluded that Britain’s 27,000 urban parks are at a ‘tipping point’ and face threat of decline with ‘severe consequences’ (House of Commons 2017: 4). The present predicament is not simply the result of short-term fiscal restraint but also a ‘systemic failure’ (Layton-Jones 2016a: 2) to secure parks’ economic and legal protection during their Victorian foundation. However, the Committee resisted widespread calls for parks to be made a legally protected service arguing that statutory protection would not guarantee their preservation (House of Commons 2017). Instead, ‘Park management will be much more varied in the future’ (HLF 2016: 13). The changed context has spawned a quest for innovative and sustainable models of funding (Nesta 2016), including: charitable trusts that manage and maintain parks on an extended lease from local authorities; park foundations to facilitate voluntary private donations; Park Improvement Districts (PIDs) where a levy is charged on business rate payers (and possibly residents); commercial income generation activities; transfer of park assets to community ownership; formal partnerships with Friends groups;² and volunteering initiatives. Many of these innovations have been adapted from historical precedent (Layton-Jones 2016a), some of which have failed previously and as a result returned to a traditional municipally-funded model. In this precarious context, a range of possible futures present themselves.

Urban Park Futures

Parks are frequently perceived as quintessential public goods, notwithstanding the exclusions and conflicts, which mark their history. A central issue at stake in the future of urban parks is their public accessibility and status as public good. Alongside analogous debates regarding contemporary pressures on diverse forms of public space (Madden 2010), urban scholars have variously sought to rethink the city through the lens of the ‘urban commons’ (Borch and Kornberger 2015; Chatterton 2019), revisiting the pioneering work of Hardin (1968) and Ostrom (1990). Pure public goods, as they showed, are ‘non-excludable’ and ‘non-rival’. The lighthouse is frequently extolled as the archetypal example. However, non-pure public goods that are limited or in high demand can suffer congestion; subject to rivalry or ‘subtractability of use’ (Ostrom 2010: 644). Club goods are available to members of a club but restricted in

1
2
3 some form to non-members. The forms of restriction may entail access control, entry charge
4 or ‘toll’. Ostrom (2010) argued that both subtractability and excludability are finely grained
5 continua varying from low to high rather than either present or absent. She added a fourth
6 type of good – common-pool resource – which ‘shares the attributes of subtractability with
7 private goods and difficulty of exclusion with public goods’ (Ostrom 2009: 644-5). Parks,
8 like forests and lakes, can be owned and managed privately, by (local) government or civic
9 association but held for common access and use.

10
11 Yet, economic theories have tended to focus on questions of *scarcity* rather than *excess*
12 (Abbott 2014). The flip-side of crowded rivalry is under-use and disuse. Park-use does not
13 neatly fit these economic models. We may even go as far to say that park provision is more
14 usually characterised by ‘excess’ since, for the most part, parks are not literally ‘crowded’. In
15 fact, the (subjective and commercial) value of a park may increase by being used and shared,
16 meaning to some extent, they constitute ‘nonsubtractive resources’ (Borch and Kornberger
17 2015: 6). Some time ago, Jacobs (1961: 102) recognised that excess can be as much a
18 problem for parks as can congestion: ‘Greatly loved neighbourhood parks benefit from a
19 certain rarity value’. Unloved and little used parks can become surplus - ‘bleak vacuums
20 between buildings’ (Jacobs 1961: 90) - that people find uninviting or dangerous places to be
21 avoided. Hence, diversity and density can be self-reinforcing dimensions of urban micro-
22 environments; whereby density fosters diversity and diversity is likely to render social
23 relations dense. The park thus offers a distinctive lens through which also to explore the
24 wider forces shaping the futures of public spaces across cities.

25
26 In what follows, we present six images of what parks might become. These images diverge
27 around three core dimensions. The first relates to ownership, governance and financing of
28 parkland, and their associated rights of access and (contractual) conditions of use and
29 potential for exclusion. The second concerns the differential uses of parks by diverse interest
30 groups and their organised interaction across time and space. The third relates to how
31 competing demands are viewed and managed in the context of the cosmopolitan city.

32 33 ***Club Parks and Club-Managed Commons***

34
35 As the residue of public space diminishes and in the face of austerity, increased demands on
36 parks incentivises various forms of ‘clubbing’, ranging from exclusive club parks to more
37 inclusive types of club-managed commons. In the former, members enjoy exclusive access,
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 either by purchasing membership or through some right of local residence - supported by a
4 tax/levy or volunteer upkeep. Precedents lie in eighteenth-century 'pleasure gardens', the
5 communal gardens of affluent parts of Victorian London (such as around Ladbroke Grove)
6 and some early public parks that charged for admission on certain days (Conway 1991). Club
7 parks are not necessarily privately-owned, although many are likely to be. Recent years have
8 seen renewed experimentation with analogous ideas. In the US, a system of paying to rent a
9 patch of green grass in a crowded park was proposed in Dolores Park in San Francisco.³
10 Certain parks in the UK have seen the introduction of an admission fee, such as Battersea
11 Park in London, to access parts that previously had been freely accessible.⁴ As a result, parts
12 or the whole of parks become, temporarily or permanently, club goods. This may be more
13 likely in Victorian parks with particularly attractive features or well-situated 'destination
14 parks'.

15
16 Club parks will have an optimal level of membership to assist with costs and sharing
17 arrangements. The 'contractual' rules of membership govern the club park; codes of conduct
18 reduce risks or fulfil certain values of membership. Where breached, membership may be
19 withdrawn or revoked, making it a powerful regulatory device fostering behavioural
20 compliance (Crawford 2003). Ultimately, club formation can induce negative externalities for
21 non-members. Club-managed commons, by contrast, do not necessarily restrict access to non-
22 members. Rather, they give members a say in governance, raising questions about the extent
23 to which they cater for and are democratically accountable to wider users (non-members).
24 Parks that serve certain interests may not feel welcoming to certain other groups, even where
25 parks are neither gated nor subject to admission charge. History provides ample evidence of
26 club-managed commons. For instance, since 1871 Wimbledon and Putney Commons have
27 been funded through a levy paid by householders within three-quarters of a mile radius. Each
28 is managed by a Board of elected Conservators in which only levy-payers are given voting
29 rights, although the Commons are open to all.⁵ The full range of recent developments,
30 including asset transfer, PIDs and charitable trusts, presents new possibilities for various
31 forms of club-managed commons to proliferate. Recently, the charitable trust model has been
32 lauded by prominent voices within the parks sector.⁶ Others have articulated concerns about
33 accountability deficits and the potential for 'self-perpetuating oligarchies' (see evidence
34 presented to House of Commons 2017: 52). Likewise, PIDs leave open questions about the
35 influence corporations and businesses have over park governance arising from their financial
36 contributions. Thus far in the UK, there have been only a handful of experiments with trusts

(i.e. Newcastle) and PIDs (i.e. Camden), although these practices are more common in the US, notably Bryant Park in New York. Privately managed by the Bryant Park Corporation - a division of the local Business Improvement District - some conceive of this initiative as providing secure and sustainable future for a public park (CABE Space 2006) while others contend that it represents a shift towards 'publicity without democracy' (Madden 2010: 187) wherein parks become designed for consumers rather than citizens. The US model has been extended to green spaces in residential areas via a Green Benefit District (GBD). There, residents vote on whether to create a GBD, which once established raises a compulsory levy on households in the area.⁷ The greater transfer of these ideas to British parks may be well received by municipal authorities seeking solutions to maintaining parks under financial pressures.

Theme Parks

The prospective expansion of theming and entertainment in urban parks is likely to be fuelled by park managers' increasing reliance on external income. According to one recent survey of local authority park managers, funding from external sources is, on average, anticipated to increase from 22.5% in 2016 to 29% by 2019 (HLF 2016: 15), however, some report that external funding already accounts for 100% of their total budget. As we define them, 'theme' parks are residual public goods that host 'club goods'. The park is open to all but the amenities – which may include various forms of 'entertainment' and leisure – are purchased. These may be amusement activities, food and drink concessions, ticketed events, sports facilities or playground access. The park becomes a marketplace where customers are drawn to the attractions and where the revenues are either wholly or partly re-invested in the park as a residual public space. For some, theming is a core feature in the 'Disneyfication' (Sorkin 1992) of public space, with its allied dynamics of privatisation and homogenisation.

There has been a long history of commercial activities within public parks as a source of revenue funding, but these have often been seen to be limited and low-impact. O'Reilly's (2013: 140) study of Heaton Park, Manchester, in 1902 notes: 'Inside the park, inequalities were also evident in the charges for use of the facilities (boating, bowling, tea rooms) but these were options that could easily be ignored in favour of a walk around the park or a picnic on the lawns'. Some paid attractions have been short-lived: Battersea Park's Festival Pleasure Gardens, opened in 1951, were intended to be self-financing through a small entrance fee, but lasted only 20 years, in part due to insufficient revenue. Recently, Wandsworth Council in

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

London permitted the first ‘Go Ape’ tree-top adventure course to open in Battersea Park with an entry fee. Beyond the UK, the Jardin de Luxembourg in Paris is a long-standing example; with charges for children and adults to enter the playground. It also has a tradition of charges for various facilities – deck chairs, pony rides, puppet theatre, crèche and vintage toy sailboats (*P’tits Voiliers*) in the *Grand Bassin*.

Forms of theming through paid activities may become more pronounced – harder to ‘ignore’ – and their effects more evident, particularly where this entails closing parts of parks or where charges are introduced for playground access and other previously free uses. Sparked by a debate about whether local authorities should be able to charge for *parkrun* - a free weekly 5km run that is managed by volunteers – following Stoke Gifford Parish Council’s decision to do so in 2016, the Government launched a consultation to consider the activities in relation to which local authorities should be *prevented* from charging (DCLG 2017b). Theme parks raise questions about the extent to which the hosting of club goods diminishes or detracts from the enjoyment experienced by its non-paying users, particularly during summer months when demand is high. There are a growing number of examples where theming may have reached a tipping point such that open access is radically undermined or where the character of the park is altered to the extent that it no longer is experienced as a distinct, green space apart from the surrounding city. Such fears recently prompted the Friends of Finsbury Park to initiate judicial review proceedings to challenge Haringey Council’s practice of letting the park for commercial events. This ongoing case may set a precedent concerning the parameters within which parks might be hired for events, providing a legal buffer against excessive theming.⁸ Hiring out parks for events may constitute a slippery slope by normalising the idea that public space can be purchased to the exclusion of the general public in ways that might be used to justify more permanent installations in the future (Smith 2016). Yet smaller events such as weddings and corporate functions which have less impact on everyday public use may constitute examples of what Ball (1993: 34) refers to as ‘Disneyfication without [too much] guilt’. In any case, austerity appears to be driving a range of innovations in types of themed parks, where erstwhile there has been a reluctance to commercialise.

City Magnet Parks

There are tensions between seeing and managing parks as spaces which serve local communities or as city-wide assets. The ‘city magnet’ park is open to all but is consciously

1
2
3 exploited by the municipal authority as a public asset within a wider urban strategy. The
4 park's management and use are subsumed within the needs and interests of the 'city' in
5 which it is located. Where in conflict, city-wide demands trump those of local park-users
6 either in the short or longer-term. Furthermore, the 'magnetism' of the 'city park' has the
7 potential to skew public resources away from other green spaces, resulting in polarisation in
8 investment. While some city magnet parks will host major events that cannot be held
9 elsewhere in the city, others will also serve the needs of the city by attracting visitors and
10 activities that may be deemed problematic elsewhere. Hence, the city magnet may
11 alternatively become a 'destination park' or a 'dumping ground'. An example of the former is
12 Greenwich Park, which was designated the equestrian venue for the London Olympic Games
13 due to its prime location, despite strong resistance from the 'No to Greenwich Olympic
14 Events' community action group (Smith 2014). The use of large Victorian parks for major
15 events is not simply a way to generate additional revenue to make up the gap left by
16 diminishing public funds but also a way to promote a city nationally or internationally. The
17 2016 World Triathlon, for example, began with an open-water swim in Roundhay Park in
18 Leeds. An example of the local versus city tensions over 'residual dumping' is evidenced in
19 debates surrounding certain uses of Woodhouse Moor in Leeds – notably regarding the
20 skatepark (Churchill et al 2018). Local residents felt that their views had been superseded by
21 city-wide interests when, in 2003, the council reconstructed the skatepark at a cost of
22 £240,000 with the intention of attracting skaters away from the major landmarks and tourist
23 attractions in the city centre where they were perceived to be creating problems. The role of a
24 city park, either as an attraction – as cities compete within national and global economies – or
25 as a means of alleviating other public spaces from erstwhile problems, is becoming
26 increasingly formalised and overt.
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45

46 One prominent context in which the city magnet park has been articulated in recent years has
47 been via the notion of 'green infrastructure', in which parks are not seen as discrete entities,
48 serving particular constituents, but rather as part of a connected 'corridor' or 'network' of
49 green spaces with interdependencies - providing hydrological and ecological benefits,
50 ambient temperature moderation and so forth. In this respect, the London Mayor's (2012) *All*
51 *London Green Grid* is exemplary. By implication, where priority is accorded a 'green
52 infrastructure', this presages a strategic approach that assumes all green spaces to be
53 interdependent, hence some parks may need to serve particular 'magnetic' functions within
54 this wider urban field. Paradoxically, the growth of Friends groups - as champions of local
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

interests - and diverse forms of ‘clubbing’ foster countervailing dynamics that may conflict with city-wide strategic planning.

Variegated Parks

In the cosmopolitan metropolis, where ‘super-diversity’ is a prevalent feature of social relations, different people seek different things from parks. The ‘variegated park’ is a public good that is purposefully designed and planned to welcome and accommodate a broad range of social groups and a wide variety of interests/uses through zoning and event programming. Effective variegation requires some form of democratic oversight to manage social complexity. Local authorities managing the range of demands of various constituents may restrict different activities or user-groups to specific times and/or delimit these to defined parts of the park. Competing demands may be organised temporally; for example, *parkrun* operates at certain times to reduce the impact of the activity on other users of the park. They may also be arranged spatially; for example, many parks have areas allocated for activities such as children’s playgrounds, skateparks, multi-use games areas, bowling, dog walking, specialist gardens, allotments and so forth. Precedents lie in the famous ‘children’s corners’ of Victorian parks, the ‘zoning’ of disruptive recreations to particular parts of Victorian parks (Churchill et al 2019), and in the Edwardian era where there were more areas created within parks for sporting activities, reflecting a broadening of the function of parks as ‘spaces for many diverse activities’ (O’Reilly 2013: 136).

Variegation seeks to address congestion and social conflict that may arise from the shared use of space by those with competing interests. It represents one kind of ‘utilitarian’ planning that accommodates diversity through segmentation in much the same way as a public swimming pool accommodates different types of users and activities at different times or in different parts of the pool. Increasing the variety of facilities and activities has beneficial impacts on park-use and can enhance safety (Lapham et al 2016). Others support variegation as a way of maximising cultural and lifestyle preferences: ‘The social interaction of diverse groups can be maintained and enhanced by providing safe, spatially adequate territories for everyone within the larger space of the overall site’ (Low et al 2005: 198). Variegated parks can adapt to meet the changing needs, preferences and demography of communities over time.

Variegation recognises that parks cannot serve all interests, in the same place, at the same time. Some parts of the park will, by design, regulation or default, become inaccessible to all

at any one time. It responds to this challenge through internal fragmentation along lines of purposive use. The park remains socially diverse in that it hosts a variety of uses and users but reflects and embeds difference and diversity rather than a shared common experience. People may rub along as they engage in their separate uses, but social interactions are likely to be limited with few opportunities for routinely negotiating difference through encounters with others. Nonetheless, effective variegation may alleviate pressures towards forms of ‘clubbing’, albeit theming may lend itself to variegation.

Co-mingling Parks

Parks offer important points of connection between communities; which variegation may foster but only to a limited degree given its segmented form. Contrastingly, the ‘co-mingling’ park is a place that seeks to foster social encounters – the use of a space by different groups at largely the same time and broadly in the same place, irrespective of whether they engage in the same activities or directly interact. The co-mingling park’s latent purpose is to foster individual and collective ‘improvement’ to well-being and social relations – in that the benefits of co-mingling are deemed to foster tolerance and understanding by sharing space and coming into loose contact with ‘others’. In a world where social and economic polarisation are overlain by insular cultural identities forged around self-reinforcing ‘echo chambers’, some commentators have championed parks as vital bastions of ‘deliberative democracy’ in that they enable ‘expressive activity’ and depend on ‘shared experiences, common knowledge and a host of unanticipated, unchosen encounters’ (Sunstein 2017). This is the rally call of the prospective co-mingling park. Yet, others have argued that *fleeting*, unintended encounters, where diverse people rub along together because of accidental proximity, do not necessarily produce ‘meaningful contact’ (Mayblin et al 2016) and may find expression in differing dynamics associated with particular forms of public space, including parks (Fincher and Iveson 2008; Barker et al 2019).

Co-mingling parks range from highly mediated spaces that actively manage and facilitate shared use through proactive regulation or purposive design to those which leave social interactions relatively unmediated. The Victorian park is the classic highly mediated co-mingling park, laid out in certain ways with copious rules and byelaws to facilitate normative patterns of relating and behaving and, through co-mingling, to harmonize relations between disparate groups of society (Conway 1991). An exemplar is Birkenhead Park, Merseyside, which famously provided the inspiration and design for Central Park in New York that

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Fredrick Olmstead transported following a visit in 1850. Managing authorities of some contemporary co-mingling parks, such as City Park in Bradford, have sought to mediate between different social groups to effect mutually convivial use of the space and ‘tolerance’ (Barker 2016). By contrast, the minimally designed and regulated co-mingling park approximates to an idealised notion of the urban commons – an unregulated, unadorned and unmanicured people’s space. It is a liminal space in which normal social mores, customs and restraints are significantly ‘loosened’ (Franck and Stevens 2007). Such parks may be used in a variety of different ways; a form of cultural ‘playdough’ to be moulded by its users and then left for others to mould. Hence, the park potentially provides a neutral landscape that a broad range of social and cultural groups with different needs and preferences may find inviting (Barker et al 2019).

However, there is a fine balance between the freedoms that a ‘liminal’ public space provides and the perceived lack of safety or civic purpose which it may engender. The notorious MacArthur Park in Los Angeles acts as a reminder of these risks (Davis 1992). The failure to ensure a safe and harmonious co-mingling of peoples with different needs and preferences may increase tendencies for ‘variegation’ or ‘clubbing’. In an age of hyper-sensitivity to difference, borders and security, the co-mingling park may seem an unlikely future image. Ironically though, considering fiscal restraint on park budgets it is possible that local authorities may be forced increasingly to take a hands-off approach or even withdraw from maintaining and regulating some parks completely – letting them ‘return to nature’ – possibly allowing local volunteer groups to mould them accordingly. As the physical environment of the park becomes more rugged, less well cared for or even ‘wild’ so too does its social use (CABE Space 2005). Ultimately, this may result in a ‘tragedy of the commons’ (Hardin 1968: 1244) whereby a park’s ‘wilderness’ status is used subsequently to justify its sale for redevelopment.

For Sale Parks

Anticipating the significant sale and loss of public parks may seem dystopian. Nonetheless, there are presently pronounced dynamics of privatisation and residualisation of urban public spaces (Minton 2012; Christophers 2018). The ‘for sale’ park is a distinct possibility, despite their longevity. In this prefiguration, the park – or more likely piecemeal slivers of it – is a commodity or asset that can be sold off by municipal authorities to businesses or land-owners for commercial use and development. Parks are not a statutory service and there is no legal

obligation on local authorities to keep or maintain them: ‘without statutory protection the risk of development hangs over sites’ (Layton-Jones 2016a: 3). In times of austerity and under pressures for housing and schools, the sale of some parks may be justified politically by enabling local authorities to invest in or sustain other public services and/or the rest of the park estate. Selling public assets is an attractive option now, since local authorities can retain all the proceeds. Such financial returns may act as an ‘incentive to sell off parks for development’ (Nesta 2016: 10). In 2016, 94 out of the 189 local authorities said they had disposed of green spaces over the preceding three years and this was expected to increase to 59% over the subsequent three years (HLF 2016: 14). The most likely sites for disposal were, respectively, amenity green spaces, outdoor sports facilities and natural or semi-natural green spaces. Major, inner-city Victorian parks may be more able to resist these pressures.

In a radical move, Knowsley Council proposed to sell 17 parks (10% of the total); arguing that this would protect the rest of the estate from government cuts.⁹ Yet, the incremental selling off of (slithers of) parks – even where justified to improve the general park stock – may produce gradual changes and reach vital tipping points with long-term reverberations for future generations. A year later, Knowsley Council dropped its proposals stating that residents ‘value them too much to lose them’.¹⁰ Parks that are ‘for sale’ may alternatively become ‘club parks’ accessible to members only, they may be designed to facilitate commercial uses (e.g. housing, business), or they may become a type of quasi-public ‘mass private property’ – like Granary Square park in London King’s Cross. Liberal public access is dependent on private invitation and subject to the conditions set by private owners/managers, as property law in the UK facilitates raw ‘exclusory power’, with no requirement to recognise ‘quasi-public’ land to which a test of reasonable access could be applied (Gray and Gray 1999).

Conclusion

In the nineteenth century, parks were integral to idealised visions of an improved future city, and became prominent symbols of Victorian social progress and civic pride. Today, this optimistic vision of the improving park that would transform the city of the future has lost much of its lustre. The Victorian confidence in acquiring parks ‘in perpetuity’ contrasts with the current precarious position of parks as vulnerable assets at risk of development or commercial exploitation. There now is a diffuse expectation that the status quo needs to change; that parks managers will ‘do things differently’, parks will ‘do different things’ and

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

their preservation will need to be ‘differently justified’ into the future. Reflecting this shift, the report of the parliamentary inquiry into the future of public parks argues that it is no longer sufficient to assume the healthy leisure and recreational benefits of parks, but that park managers and civil servants from across governmental departments need to work collaboratively with a plurality of actors in civil society to maximise and render explicit their diverse contributions to society. This quest for renewed legitimacy through evidence of economic value tied to wider public goods – environmental, educational, health-related - is likely to pull urban parks in diverse directions. Our contention is that in contrast to the dominant image of the Victorian park, we are likely to see the intensification of increasingly varied urban park futures. This pluralisation will be driven by managing authorities and publics as they respond in different ways to the pressures parks face. The varied images, we present, highlight both uncertainties and questions over the contemporary social role and purpose of parks and how they might best be valued and utilised. In exploring possible futures, we hope to provide clarification of the critical contours of developments and their trajectories to inform wider public debate.

The images of park futures sketched above are in no sense fixed; they imply temporal trajectories that encompass possible ‘tipping points’. The slow accumulation of stresses and tendencies may result in abrupt non-linear developments; as a result incremental changes can become transformative, with the potential to undermine erstwhile values, ethos and characteristics. Undoubtedly, there will also be interaction effects; differing logics may compete or complement each other producing novel effects and recursive feedback loops that result in various ‘emergent patterns’. Our focus has predominantly been on the fate of the Victorian park in the UK context; nonetheless, we suggest that these ‘images of the future’ have wider application and resonance, especially in relation to inner-city parks created since the Victorian era and to parks in other parts of the world - notably where the British Victorian ideal has been imported. Evidently, there are powerful private and public vested interests at play that will influence the future trajectories of both specific urban parks and park futures more generally. As urbanisation heightens demand for space, the prosperity of individual parks depends on sustaining their claim to differential value against competing claims of development and the risk of chronic underfunding. Hence, the contest over the future is not only a struggle between competing ideas, but also a struggle between competing actors with differential power and resources to advance their preferred visions.

1
2
3 In this contest, mobilising citizens as actors and civil society resources presents significant
4 emerging opportunities, as urban dwellers have strong emotional attachments to their parks.
5 For, parks are not only the product of, and steeped in, history but are also places where
6 everyday history is made in the sense of people's intimate lives – their romances, family
7 outings and personal commemorations - in the process, people invest parks with abundant,
8 deeply-held memories, sentiments and emotions. Recent years have seen a considerable
9 growth in the number and size of park groups and voluntary alliances. The five years to 2016
10 saw an estimated 60% rise in local Friends of Parks groups, such that there are now over
11 6,000 in the UK, constituting an increasingly powerful grassroots movement overseen by the
12 National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces.¹¹ For instance, the value of fundraising and
13 volunteering by park Friends and user groups each year is estimated to exceed £50 million
14 and £70 million respectively (HLF 2016: 10). Furthermore, these community groups and
15 voluntary associations are assuming and are likely to continue to assume greater
16 responsibility for the management and upkeep of local parks. While government invariably
17 conceive such volunteers as helping to plug a funding gap and staffing shortage, they are
18 simultaneously becoming better organised, more vocal and are likely to play a significant role
19 in shaping prospective pathways between possible, probable and preferable park futures. An
20 informed public debate that connects the rich heritage of parks with immanent questions
21 about their future sustainability in the context of underfunding and governance deficits, is
22 likely to assist in mobilising this disparate community in generalising demands for
23 safeguarding urban parks through adequate public funding and legal protection. This
24 necessitates that governments and park governors come to view members of the public, less
25 as passive recipients of a service or users of a public asset and more as knowledgeable actors
26 with capabilities and resources that can help shape preferable futures.

27
28
29 Explorations in social futures of the kind offered here are important because they surface
30 ideas about public purposes and the common good. A renewed interest in social futures, to
31 which we hope to contribute, demands that social scientists reclaim the terrain of future
32 studies – from futurology, socio-technical imaginaries and various fatalistic and catastrophic
33 dystopias – because future visions have significant consequences for the emerging present
34 shape of society. As Urry (2016: 11) observed, a 'key question for social science is who or
35 what owns the future – this capacity to own futures being central in how power works'. This
36 prompts us to differentiate between the possible, probable and preferable. As such, it
37 underscores the capacity for human agency and new forms of planning – in the face of
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

complex, interdependent (often global) and seemingly intractable challenges. It is only by insisting that futures are social that public bodies and civil society institutions, rather than autonomous markets and endogenous technologies, become central to disentangling, debating and delivering preferable futures. The purpose of excavating images of parks of tomorrow is to provoke public dialogue and debate about whether and how these possible futures align with preferable futures – that is, with desired pathways of development, informed by moral and ethical choices. Now more than ever, there is a need for an informed public debate that engages and animates the diverse civil society actors about how parks might be re-imagined for the twenty-first century: one that draws upon their rich heritage but remain unconstrained by it; one that simultaneously projects into the longer-term, defying the contemporary preoccupation with the future as the extended present or return to an idealised past. Thinking through the images presented here allows us to care for the future of parks, not just by understanding past and present, but by seeking to transform it in some way, guided by that understanding. Hence, our intentions align closely with Appadurai's (2013: 3) claim that 'the future is ours to design, if we are attuned to the right risks, the right speculations, and the right understanding of the material world we both inherit and shape'. To do so, he goes on to assert; 'it is vital to build a picture of the historical present that can help us to find the right balance between utopia and despair'. It is hoped that the preceding discussion assists in charting such a course.

References

- Abbott A (2014) The Problem of Excess. *Sociological Theory* 32(1): 1–26.
- Adam B (2010) History of the Future. *Rethinking History* 14(3): 361–78.
- Appadurai A (2013) *The Future as Cultural Fact*. London: Verso.
- Ball E (1993) To Theme or Not to Theme. In: Muschamp H, Karasov D and Waryan S (Eds) *The Once and Future Park*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, pp.31-37.
- Barker A (2016) Mediated Conviviality and the Urban Social Order. *British Journal of Criminology* 57(4): 848–866.
- Bell W (1997) *Foundations of Futures Studies*. New Brunswick: Transaction.
- Bell W and Mau J (1971) *The Sociology of the Future*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Borch C and Kornberger M (2015) (Eds) *Urban Commons: Rethinking the City*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- CABE Space (2005) *Decent parks? Decent behaviour?* London: CABE.

- CABE Space (2006) *Paying for Parks*. London: CABE.
- Chatterton P (2019) *Unlocking Sustainable Cities*. London: Pluto Press.
- Christophers B (2018) *The New Enclosure*. London: Verso.
- Churchill D, Crawford A and Barker A (2018) Thinking Forward through the Past: Prospecting for Urban Order in (Victorian) Public Parks. *Theoretical Criminology* 22(4): 523-544.
- Conway H (1991) *People's Parks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Conway H (2000) Everyday Landscapes: Public Parks from 1930 to 2000. *The Garden History Society* 28(1): 117-134.
- Corfield P (2007) *Time and the Shape of History*. London: Yale University Press.
- Crawford A (2003) Contractual Governance of Deviant Behaviour. *Journal of Law and Society* 30(4): 479-505.
- Davis M (1990) *City of Quartz*. London: Verso.
- Davis M (1992) *Beyond Blade Runner*. New Jersey: Open Magazine.
- DCLG (2017a) *Government Response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report: The Future of Public Parks*. London: DCLG.
- DCLG (2017b) *Running Free: Consultation of preserving the free use of public parks*. London: DCLG.
- Fincher R and Iveson K (2008) *Planning for Diversity*. Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Franck KA and Stevens Q (2007) (Eds) *Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Garland D (2001) *The Culture of Control*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gray KJ and Gray SF (1999) Private Property and Public Propriety. In: McLean J (ed) *Property and the Constitution*. Oxford: Hart Publishing, pp.11–39.
- Greenhalgh L and Worpole K (1995) *Park Life*. London: Comedia.
- Hardin G (1968) The Tragedy of the Commons. *Science* 162: 1243–1248.
- HLF (2016) *The State of UK Public Parks 2016*. London: HLF.
- House of Commons (2017) *Public parks: Seventh Report of Session 2016–17*, HC 45. London: House of Commons.
- Inglis D (2014) What is worth defending in sociology today? *Cultural Sociology* 8(1): 99–118.
- Jacobs J (1961) *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House.
- Koselleck R (2004) *Futures Past* (trans. Keith Tribe). Cambridge, Mass: MIT.

- Lapham SC, Cohen DA, Han B, Williamson S, Evenson KR, McKenzie TL, Hillier A and Ward P (2016) How important is perception of safety to park use? *Urban Studies* 53(12): 2624-2636.
- Lambert D (2005) *The Park Keeper*. London: English Heritage.
- Layton-Jones K (2016a) *History of Public Park Funding and Management (1820-2010)*. Portsmouth: Historic England.
- Layton-Jones K (2016b) *Uncertain prospects: public parks in the new age of austerity*. London: The Gardens Trust.
- Low S, Taplin D and Scheld S (2005) *Rethinking Urban Parks*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Madden D (2010) Revisiting the end of public space. *City and Community* 9(2): 187–207.
- Mayblin L, Valentine G and Andersson J (2016) In the contact zone. *The Geographical Journal*, 182(2): 213-222.
- Mayor of London (2012) *Green Infrastructure and Open Environments*. London: Greater London Authority.
- Minton A (2012) *Ground Control*. London: Penguin.
- Nesta (2016) *Learning to Rethink Parks*. London: Big Lottery Fund.
- O'Reilly C (2013) From 'the people' to 'the citizen'. *Urban History* 40(1): 136–155.
- Ostrom E (1990) *Governing the Commons*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ostrom E (2010) Beyond Markets and States. *American Economic Review* 100(3): 641–72.
- Smith A (2014) 'Borrowing' Public Space to Stage Major Events. *Urban Studies* 51(2): 247–263.
- Smith A (2016) *Events in the City*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Sorkin M (1992) *Variations on a Theme Park*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Sunstein C (2017) *#Republic: Divided Democracy in the Age of Social Media*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Taleb NN (2007) *The Black Swan*. London: Allen Lane.
- Urban Parks Forum (2001) *Public Park Assessment*. Caversham: Urban Parks Forum.
- Urry J (2016) *What is the Future?* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Endnotes

¹ <https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/graph-doom-and-changing-role-local-government>

² Although ‘Friends’ groups take different forms, they broadly comprise volunteers who work to maintain, improve and promote a park or green space.

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/05/26/what-happened-when-an-already-crazed-city-charged-people-to-reserve-space-at-a-public-park/>

⁴ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-13391175>

⁵ <https://www.wpcc.org.uk/information-on-governance/the-commons-levy>

⁶ For example, National Trust: <http://www.futureparks.org/toolkit/peoples-parks-trust>

⁷ <http://greenbenefit.org/>

⁸ <https://www.thefriendsoffinsburypark.org.uk/finsbury-park/our-appeal-explained/>

⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-merseyside-42418393>

¹⁰ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-44446112>

¹¹ <https://www.natfedparks.org.uk/>